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11 JAN 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL ROSS

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1. The purpose of this memorandum is to forward comments on U2R carrier operations in the hope that they will be of value during planning and execution of future deployments. These comments are based on observation of BLUE GULL V operations on the USS AMERICA in November 1969.

NRO, USN & USAF REVIEWS COMPLETED

a. The Navy's feeling on BLUE GULL V is that the operation was successfully executed. The fact that the initial landings were completed in less than optimum weather conditions points out the feasibility of operating the U2R from a carrier deck. No problems developed that were beyond the capability of the crew to handle. It can be anticipated that future operations will be conducted with the same relative ease.

b. From the standpoint of safety it is suggested that pilots be trained to automatically close the speed brakes upon arrestment. Personnel involved in disengaging the hook from the wire and in taxiing the aircraft forward were often observed to be within the arc of the speed brakes. If the speed brakes are closed on arrestment, this hazard will not exist.

c. BLUE GULL V was conducted with only one LSO. The Navy as normal practice uses two or more LSO's on the platform during operations and pre-deployment field practice. This method allows us to constantly train new LSO's, gives us more expertise in observance of each pass which often helps to detect dangerous trends as they start to develop and gives us flexibility in operations that we would not have if we were tied to only one LSO. From the Navy's point of view, it would be desirable for two LSO's to be in this program any time carrier operations are to be conducted.

d. A pre-deployment briefing given by ships' company personnel to the pilots and crews is considered highly desirable from the view point of safety and smooth running operations. It is realized that the short fuze involved with BLUE GULL V precluded this briefing from being scheduled but it is hoped that in future operations it can be accomplished.

e. It was noted that no one person was designated as a point of contact in the assigned ready room during BLUE GULL V operations. From the standpoint of cover security and convenience of ships' company personnel wishing to contact specific people, it is desirable that some cognizant person be assigned to be in the ready room when embarked. This duty person could then be a single point of contact for all questions for and problems pertaining to the detachment.

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f. There have been observations that the [redacted] flap got somewhat [redacted] 25X1 out of hand and perhaps received more visibility than was intended by Naval 25X1 personnel. Now that [redacted] has been surfaced and cognizant personnel have been read properly into the program, I think we have available a suitable funding and contact route for any future operations.

2. The point of contact within the Navy Department for future operations is the Director of Naval Reconnaissance, Op-03R. We are more than ready to cooperate in helping to get the job done.

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